



PROGRAMME D'APPUI À L'INTÉGRATION SOCIO-ÉCONOMIQUE DES JEUNES EN RÉPUBLIQUE DE GUINÉE

COUNTERFACTUAL IMPACT EVALUATION



Funded by
the European Union

EVALUATION CONTEXT

Guinea is confronted to high levels of underemployment, precarious working conditions, and low levels of productivity, especially among youths. The challenges of youths to find a decent job are often due the lack of technical and soft skills and action is therefore needed to facilitate access to trainings designed to develop such skills.

In this context, the *parcours* INTEGRA from the International Trade Centre (ITC) provides adapted vocational training to youth aged 18-35 years old across the country with personalized coaching and training of, on average, six to nine months. Throughout three cohorts, the project aimed to provide training on technical and management skills as well as helping beneficiaries to gain work experience

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT

To measure the impacts of the project, C4ED is conducting a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) in which eligible candidates applying between 2021 and 2022 were randomly selected to either follow the *parcours* INTEGRA or only have access to online training material.

After baseline data was collected, the trainings took place. C4ED is currently undertaking a series of follow-up surveys 18, 24 and 30 months after the registration to capture impacts of the project. The quantitative component built an initial sample of 2,596 youth and includes key sub-groups (women and candidates willing to start a business) to allow inves-

QUICK FACTS

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

International Trade Centre (ITC)

LOCATION

Guinea

METHODS

Difference-in-Difference (DiD) and weighting

TARGET GROUPS

Youth between 18 and 35 years old including women

FINANCING AMOUNT

15 000 000 EUR

tigating the project's respective impacts on these groups. As of July 2023, C4ED collected data 18 months after registration on 2,155 candidates. In addition, C4ED collected qualitative data on 72 respondents through 3 Focus Group Discussions (FGD), 53 In-Depth Interviews (IDI) and 3 Key Informant Interviews (KII) with beneficiaries, coaches, ITC staff and other relevant stakeholders to provide insights on whether the trainings address the beneficiaries' needs but also on how and why the changes observed in the RCT materialized. The evaluation was challenged by the delays in the registration process that lasted

more than one year. This implied adapting the timing of the data collections for the different cohorts. Another challenge that the evaluation will face is the low take-up rate among the selected candidates which will “dilute” the positive impacts of the

project. Finally, given the limited number of returning migrants, C4ED modified the qualitative approach by adapting the interview grids and the sample to explore the challenges faced by the programme to enrol this specific population.

BUILDING ON SOLID FOUNDATIONS

Counterfactual impact evaluations (CIEs) are used to identify the attributable effect of a project on beneficiaries. The “counterfactual” is what life would have looked like in the absence of the intervention. Unlike in simple before-and-after comparisons, CIEs provide a way to separate program impacts from other effects. Since we cannot directly observe a counterfactual, we construct a control group using experimental and quasi-experimental econometric methods to estimate program impacts.

A randomized control trial (RCT) is an experimental method in which people from an eligible population are randomly selected to receive the program or serve as a control group. Randomization eliminates systematic differences before the intervention takes place between program recipients and the control group, allowing researchers to estimate the causal impact of the program.

HOW WILL A CIE INFORM POLICY?

The CIE will provide insights on whether the personalized trainings provided by ITC have an impact on employment, resilience, income, and intentions to migrate as well as the underpinning mechanisms that enable such changes. The study will also investigate effects by subgroups such as women on whether the program is adapt-

ed to often-marginalized populations and how the implementation can be adapted accordingly. From a broader perspective, the evaluation will build knowledge on the potential of tailored trainings to contribute to the achievement of the European Union Emergency Trust Fund’s Strategic Objective 1.

TIPS FOR FUTURE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

C4ED and ITC collaborated to digitalise the registration and the selection process using Kobo Collect. While the digitalisation represented a gain in efficiency, the assignment of candidates to the control group was not accepted by all project team members due to conflicting objectives and lack of information. To ensure a smooth collaboration, C4ED recommends highlighting the implications of conducting an RCT before the start of the project to all relevant stakeholders.

Only 36% of the selected candidates received a training. Based on preliminary findings, C4ED recommends either increasing the training capacities of the

project or reducing the objectives of youth to train to ensure an efficient use of resources.

Finally, C4ED recommends the project to adopt a standardized monitoring system to better follow the project activities and the evolutions of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). For the evaluation this is particularly useful to better understand who benefitted from the project and who did not. Such a system requires standardised data collection. However, monitoring systems can be complex to set up and implies that the project monitoring team can design and deploy them accordingly.